

I copies ✓ to
D. J. H.

1 RD
PUSD

CONFIDENTIAL

RES DES
MOD (014)



British Embassy,
BAGHDAD.

II Enter

(2/3)

Min Secy
J. H. 12
AMH

18 December, 1970.

RECEIVED
NEP 2/3

Iraqi Foreign Policy

We were interested to see, in Tripoli's telegram no. 1672 ^{2/2} Colonel Qaddafi's statement in his speech on 9 December that Iraq had rejected its obligations under the "Qaddafi Plan". We had not heard this ourselves and it is all the more significant since the Iraqis had, at the Jure Summit in Tripoli, adopted the "Qaddafi Plan" and presented it as a joint Iraqi/Libyan one. The news that they are now unwilling to accept their responsibilities under the Plan is yet another indication of the degree to which they have opted out of Arab and world affairs since the civil war in Jordan and the death of President Nasser.

2. Other indications of this current lack of interest in affairs outside Iraq are:

(a) the disengagement of their troops from the front line in Jordan (see in particular Defence Attaché Amman's telno. 280809Z of 28 November);

^{10/6}
NEP (b) the comparative low key of Iraqi propaganda against the "Roger's plan" since the death of President Nasser and indeed the noticeably lower level of interest in the Palestine Question generally both on the radio and in the press;

(c) the failure to take the opportunities offered to them both by the death of President Nasser (when they might have been expected, at least by now, to have exploited the weak position of the Egyptian leadership to further their own aspirations to leadership of the Arab world) and by the change of government in Syria which offered an opportunity, apparently now lost, to re-establish some sort of working relationship with the Syrian Ba'ath. (On this last point, you will have noticed Hafez al-Assad's cool remarks about Iraq reported in Cairo's Al Akhbar on 1 December, and subsequently in the Arab World.)

3. As to the particular question of Iraq/U.A.R. relations,
.../Iraq's

P. R. M. Hinchcliffe, Esq.,
Near Eastern Department,
F.C.O.

CONFIDENTIAL

LAST PAPER

mk
57.

CONFIDENTIAL



- 2 -

NSP 3/322/ Iraq's inactivity had given the impression, at least from this end, that relations were improving. (Baghdad radio certainly bore much of the responsibility for the deterioration in relations in August and September of this year). This seemed a real improvement which might account for the release of Iraqi students in Cairo reported in Goulding's letter 3/78 of 2 December. It is too early to judge to what extent Haikal's recent accusation of Ba'athist subversion in Egypt will disrupt this relative calm. The Party newspaper, Al Thawra, has replied with lengthy and detailed editorials attempting to prove that the document in question is a C.I.A. forgery; the Egyptian Embassy here are taking the line that Haikal is no longer His Master's Voice.

4. Meanwhile, the Iraqi régime appears to be concentrating the greater part of their attention to the home front where there are continuing signs that the pragmatists within the Party are gaining some ground over the doctrinaires. The only outside field in which their interest continues unabated is of course the Gulf, about which the Ambassador is writing separately.

5. It is generally thought here that this new trend is the result of the policies of the more moderate elements, who take the line that Iraq must set its own house in order before it can play an effective rôle in the Arab world; no doubt these policies were given some impetus when Iraq burnt its fingers so badly during the civil war in Jordan.

6. It is therefore not surprising that the régime would prefer at this stage not to commit themselves firmly to the "Qaddafi Plan" which would involve them in a fixed and possibly increased contribution towards the confrontation with Israel. This is not to suggest that isolationism is necessarily going to become a permanent feature of Iraqi foreign policy; but certainly at this stage, the régime will want to keep their options open.

Yum
Slide
(M. K. Jenner)

c.c. Chanceries at:

Cairo, Beirut, Amman, Tripoli, Kuwait and Residency Bahrain.

CONFIDENTIAL

Iraq Opting Out Of Arab And World Affairs To Concentrate On Internal Policy. Foreign Policy Of Iraq. 4 Feb. 1971. MS Middle East Online: Iraq, 1914-1974: Selected files from series AIR, CAB, CO, FCO, FO, PREM, T, WO, The National Archives, Kew, UK FCO 17/1247. The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com/apps/doc/SC5107475659/GDSC?u=webdemo&sid=bookmark-GDSC&xid=ec49be12&pg=1. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.